

TITLE 42
IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE – WATER RIGHTS AND RECLAMATION

CHAPTER 2
APPROPRIATION OF WATER -- PERMITS, CERTIFICATES, AND LICENSES --
SURVEY

***42-233a. “CRITICAL GROUND WATER AREA” DEFINED—PUBLIC HEARINGS—
PUBLICATION OF NOTICE—GRANTING OR DENIAL OF APPLICATION—APPEAL.***

“Critical ground water area” is defined as any ground water basin, or designated part thereof, not having sufficient ground water to provide a reasonably safe supply for irrigation of cultivated lands, or other uses in the basin at the then current rates of withdrawal, or rates of withdrawal projected by consideration of valid and outstanding applications and permits, as may be determined and designated, from time to time, by the director of the department of water resources.

Upon the designation of a “critical ground water area” it shall be the duty of the director of the department of water resources to conduct a public hearing in the area concerned to apprise the public of such designation and the reasons therefore. Notice of the hearing shall be published in two (2) consecutive weekly issues of a newspaper of general circulation in the area immediately prior to the date set for hearing.

In the event an area has been designated as a “critical ground water area” and the director of the department of water resources desires to remove such designation or modify the boundaries thereof, he shall likewise conduct a public hearing following similar publication of notice prior to taking such action.

When a “critical ground water area” is designated by the director of the department of water resources, or at any time thereafter during the existence of the designation, the director may approve a ground water management plan for the area. The ground water management plan shall provide for managing the effects of ground water withdrawals on the aquifer from which withdrawals are made and on any other hydraulically connected sources of water.

In the event an application for permit is made with respect to an area that has not been designated as a critical ground water area the director of the department of water resources shall forthwith issue a permit in accordance with the provisions of section 42-203A and section 42-204, Idaho Code, provided said application otherwise meets the requirements of such sections; and further provided that if the applicant proposes to appropriate water from a ground water basin or basins in an amount which exceeds ten thousand (10,000) acre-feet per year either from a single or a combination of diversion points, and the director determines that the withdrawal of such amount will substantially and adversely affect existing pumping levels of appropriators pumping from such basin or basins, or will substantially and adversely affect the amount of water available for withdrawal from such basin or basins under existing water rights, the director may require that the applicant undertake such recharge of the ground water basin or basins as will offset that withdrawal adversely affecting existing pumping levels or water rights.

In the event an application for permit is made in an area which has been designated as a critical ground water area, if the director of the department of water resources from the investigation made by him on said application as herein provided, or from the investigation made by him in determining the area to be critical, or from other information that has come officially to his attention, has reason to believe that there is insufficient water available subject to appropriation at the location of the proposed well described in the application, the director of the department of water resources may forthwith deny said application; provided, however, that if ground water at such location is available in a lesser amount than that applied for the director of the department of water resources may issue a permit for the use of such water to the extent that such water is available for such appropriation.

The director may require all water right holders within a critical ground water area to report withdrawals of ground water and other necessary information for the purpose of assisting him in determining available ground water supplies and their usage.

The director, upon determination that the ground water supply is insufficient to meet the demands of water rights within all or portions of a critical ground water area, shall order those water right holders on a time priority basis, within the area determined by the director, to cease or reduce withdrawal of water until such time as the director determines there is sufficient ground water. Such order shall be given only before September 1 and shall be effective for the growing season during the year following the date the order is given.

Any applicant dissatisfied with the decision of the director of the department of water resources may appeal to the district court in the manner provided for in section 42-237e, Idaho Code.

42-233b. GROUND WATER MANAGEMENT AREA

"Ground water management area" is defined as any ground water basin or designated part thereof which the director of the department of water resources has determined may be approaching the conditions of a critical ground water area. Upon designation of a ground water management area the director shall publish notice in two (2) consecutive weekly issues of a newspaper of general circulation in the area.

When a ground water management area is designated by the director of the department of water resources, or at any time thereafter during the existence of the designation, the director may approve a ground water management plan for the area. The ground water management plan shall provide for managing the effects of ground water withdrawals on the aquifer from which withdrawals are made and on any other hydraulically connected sources of water.

Applications for permits made within a ground water management area shall be approved by the director only after he has determined on an individual basis that sufficient water is available and that other prior water rights will not be injured.

The director may require all water right holders within designated water management area to report withdrawals of ground water and other necessary information for the purpose of assisting him in determining available ground water supplies and their usage.

The director, upon determination that the ground water supply is insufficient to meet the demands of water rights within all or portions of a water management area, shall order those water right holders on a time priority basis, within the area determined by the director, to cease or reduce withdrawal of water until such time as the director determines there is sufficient ground water. Such order shall be given only before September 1 and shall be effective for the growing season during the year following the date the order is given.